COURSE SUMMARY
This course is designed to introduce you to qualitative methods in sociological research. We will explore the processes of conducting qualitative research by broadly examining the social ecology of urban neighborhoods. You will learn how to propose executable research questions, become familiar with ethical issues related to research with human subjects, explore theoretical approaches to fieldwork, and apply methodological techniques using urban neighborhoods in Montreal as the focus of your qualitative inquiry. The readings will be drawn from methodological textbooks and articles on qualitative research as well as examples from renowned ethnographies of urban life in American cities.

REQUIREMENTS
I. Class Activities & Participation 35%
   1.1 Attendance 5%
   1.2 Practice interviews¹ 5%
   1.3 Metro direct observations + fieldnote¹ 10%
   1.4 Grading of interview guides² 5%
   1.6 Open and focused/axial coding (transcripts and fieldnotes)² 10%

2. Research Project 65%
   2.1 Human Subject Ethics & Compliance tutorial¹ 5%
   2.2 Interview guide & consent form² 5%
   2.3 Coding, analytical memos & coding tree² 20%
   2.4 Neighborhood direct observation fieldnote¹ 10%
   2.5 Results Report² 25%

¹Individual grade
²Group grade
FURTHER DETAILS ON REQUIREMENTS

Equipment and Software
To be discussed in class.

Class Activities and Participation
Active class participation is expected during each class. Students are expected to read all the assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class with a sign-in sheet. Excused absences are granted only for medical emergencies affecting a student’s health or other extreme situations (e.g., a death in the family). Absences due to medical reasons require documentation (e.g., note from a healthcare provider).

We will be doing various class activities to help students better understand some of the more technical aspects of qualitative data analysis. Students’ participation in the class activities will be graded accordingly. Some class activities will be done within students’ assigned research groups. Students must be present in class in order to receive credit for group-based class activities. If a student is absent s/he will receive a grade of zero while his/her team member(s) who were present and who completed the in-class group activity will receive a group grade.

Research Project
Students will work in groups of 2 for the research project. Each team will propose a research question (or set of questions) related to social processes in urban neighborhoods. The fieldwork will consist of a direct observation in the selected Montreal neighborhood and face-to-face interviews with neighborhood residents. Once all the data has been gathered, students will work within their groups to code the interview transcripts and direct observation field notes. Each team will decipher themes, analyze and write up the findings in a final report consisting of a results section and a methodological appendix.

REQUIRED READINGS
The following textbooks are required for this course:


These required books are also available on course reserves at the Social Sciences and Humanities Library: https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/courseReserves/course/id/15782040
In addition to the textbooks, we will also draw on journal articles and book chapters. All journal articles will be available for download from myCourses. Additional readings can be found in the course pack.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS
A full grade will be deducted for every 24 hours that the assignment is late. For example, if your neighborhood observation fieldnote is submitted a day late, and you earn a B- on the assignment, your adjusted grade will be C+.

PLAGIARISM
McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). (approved by Senate on 29 January 2003.)

SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK
In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 – see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluations.)

COPYRIGHT MATERIAL
© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

Note: The due dates for the various assignments are subject to change, contingent on discussion and agreement from the entire class.
DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

CP = Course pack
MyC = PDF available for download from MyCourses

Week 1 – September 3: Introduction

Week 2 – September 10: Theoretical Approaches to Ethnography & Fieldwork


***Student research interests recorded***

Week 3 – September 17: Urban Ethnography & Neighborhood Effects


***Research project team members assigned in class***
**Week 4 – September 24: Ethical Considerations & Design of Research Questions**


**Recommended:**


**In-Class Activity:**

*As a group you will come up with your research question or set of questions.*

**Sign-up for the Tri-Council (Online) Course on Research Ethics (see URL). Complete ENTIRE TUTORIAL. Print the certificate at the end of the tutorial, indicating that you have successfully completed it. Bring this print out to class on October 8.*

[MyC]

http://tcps2core.ca/welcome

---

**Week 5 – October 1: Sampling, Entry into the Field & Data Collection**


**Recommended:**

**In-Class Activity:**
Due:
1. Research question
2. Consent form

**Fieldwork Plan**

**Week 6 – October 8: Interviewing Nuts and Bolts, Part I**

*In-Class Activity:*
*Mock interviews*

Due:
Proof of Tri-Council tutorial completion

**IMPORTANT: You should start recruiting prospective interviewees by this date**

**Week 7 – October 15: Interviewing Nuts and Bolts, Part 2**

*In-Class Activity:*
As a group you will read another group’s interview guide, provide written feedback for improving the interview guide, and assign an overall grade (out of 100 points).

Due:
Interview Guide¹

¹*Each group must email me 1 copy of their interview guide by 5 pm on Monday October 14.*
Week 8 – October 22: Participant Observations

**Recommended:**


**In-Class Activity:**
*Direct observation of incivilities in metro stations*

Week 9 – October 29: Data Analysis Part I: Data Management, MaxQDA Tutorial and Open Coding


MaxQDA Class Tutorial. [MyC]

**Recommended:**
MaxQDA 12 Online Tutorial – Teamwork. [MyC]

**In-Class Activity:**
*MaxQDA tutorial, open coding of sample transcript & metro station direct observation field notes.*

***BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS***

Due:
Typed field notes from metro station direct observation
Week 10 – November 5: Data Analysis Part II: Open Coding (Continued) and Memos


In-Class Activity:
Open coding and memos for interview transcripts

***BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS***

Due:
Interview transcripts

In addition to electronic copies of the transcripts, which you will need for the coding exercise, each team must also submit hard copies of the interview transcripts to me at the beginning of class.

REMINDER: Between the November 5 and November 19 classes, students should conduct their direct observation in their target neighborhood and write up thick description field notes.

---

Week 11 – November 12: Data Analysis Part III: Focused Coding


In-Class Activity:
Focused coding and integrative memos for complete set of interview transcripts

***BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS***

Teams must have open coding of all their interview transcripts completed by this date.
Week 12 – November 19:
No readings. Coding & analysis of neighborhood direct observation field notes.

In-Class Activity:
Open coding and analytical memo for neighborhood direct observation field notes

***BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS***

Due:
Typed field notes from neighborhood observations

---

Week 13 – November 26: Writing Ethnographic Text


In-Class Activity: Selection of 3 themes and continued data analysis

***BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS***

---

**IMPORTANT NOTE ON FINAL RESULTS REPORT & MAXQDA DATABASE**

1. One electronic copy of the final results report has to be uploaded to the assignment folder on MyCourses by 11:59 P.M. on **Monday December 5, 2019**. Only 1 copy per team needs to be submitted.

2. Final versions of MaxQDA database **and all associated documents** must be saved on each team’s Dropbox folders by 11:59 PM on **December 5, 2019**.